



**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF
CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH,
AND VICTIM SERVICES**

**Maryland State Board of Victim Services 2020 Annual
Report**

*CP §§ 11-914(1) and 11-915(b)(5); EX ORD 01.01.2020.02/Ch. 11,
2020*

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Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor

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Roster of Members

Pursuant to § 11-912 of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Maryland State Board of Victim Services is composed of various members, and a Chair and Vice-Chair appointed by Governor Hogan.

Governor Larry Hogan
Governor of Maryland

V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.
Executive Director, Governor's Office of
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Anne Arundel County State's Attorney

Steven Levin, Esq.
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Board

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Public Member, Baltimore County State's
Attorney's Office

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The Honorable Joe Riley, Esq.
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Department of Public Safety and
Correctional Services

Executive Summary

In accordance with §§ 11-914 and 11-915 of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Maryland State Board of Victim Services (Board) is charged to continue its mission to ensure victims of crime receive justice and are treated with dignity, respect, and compassion through comprehensive victim services. Through its charge, and under the leadership of Chair Steven Kelly, Esq., Sanford Heisler Sharp, LLC, Vice-Chair Barbara Bond, Attorney General's Office, and staff from the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (Office),¹ the Board continued to partner with victim service providers; local communities; executive, legislative, and judicial branches of State government; and the federal government to better serve Maryland's victims of crime.

To address its charge, the Board continued to improve the treatment for victims of crime by working with criminal justice agencies and private non-profit organizations, creating and expanding innovative initiatives, and welcoming feedback and suggestions from individuals and communities across the State.

Pursuant to §§ 11-914(1) and 11-915(b)(5) of the Criminal Procedure Article, this *Maryland State Board of Victim Services 2020 Annual Report* includes information on the activities of the Board, the administration of funds to victims of crime, and specific recommendations to improve the treatment and services for Maryland's victims of crime.

Background

Recognizing the unique and distinctive needs of crime victims, the Maryland General Assembly created the Board and the position of the State Coordinator in 1987. This was done for the purpose of monitoring, assessing, coordinating, and making recommendations concerning state and local efforts to assist victims of crime. The Board's mission is to ensure that all crime victims in Maryland are treated with dignity, respect, and compassion during all phases of the criminal justice process.

In 1991, under the authority of the Office, the Maryland General Assembly created the Maryland Victims of Crime (MVOC) fund to provide funding support for victim services. In 2007, the Legal Services for Crime Victims (LSCV) fund was created by the Maryland General Assembly to provide Maryland crime victims the opportunity to have legal representation in the criminal court system. The Board makes funding recommendations to the Office, which administers and manages the MVOC and the LSCV grant projects.

¹ Maryland General Assembly. (2020). [*Chapter 11, Acts of 2020*](#). In March 2020, the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention was renamed the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services.

Pursuant to § 11-914 of the Criminal Procedure Article, and under the authority of the Executive Director of the Office, the Board shall:

- Submit to the Governor an annual written report of its activities, including its administration of the MVOC fund;
- Monitor the service needs of victims;
- Advise the Governor on the needs of victims;
- Recommend the appointment of the Victim Services Coordinator to the Executive Director;
- Review and approve the Victim Services Coordinator's plans and annual reports, and the Victim Services Coordinator's implementation, operation, and revision of programs;
- Approve or disapprove each grant application submitted by the Office;
- Advise the State's Attorneys' Coordination Council on the adoption of regulations governing the administration of the Victim and Witness Protection and Relocation Program established under § 11-902 of this subtitle;
- Advise the State's Attorneys' Coordinator on the administration of the Victim and Witness Protection and Relocation Program;
- Develop pamphlets to notify victims and victim's representatives of the rights, services, and procedures provided under Article 47 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights or State law, how to request information regarding an unsolved case, and how to request that an offender be placed on electronic monitoring or electronic monitoring with victim stay-away alert technology, including:
 - One pamphlet relating to the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) system protocol registration process and the time before and after the filing of a charging document other than an indictment or information in circuit court; and
 - A second pamphlet relating to the time after the filing of an indictment or information in circuit court; and
- Develop a notification request form and an MDEC system protocol in consultation with the Administrative Office of the Courts, through which a victim or victim's representative may request to be notified under § 11-104 of this title.

Furthermore, and in accordance with § 11-915(b)(5) of the Criminal Procedure Article, the Victim Services Coordinator shall, under the authority of the Executive Director, submit to the Governor, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services, and the Board an annual report that includes recommendations on how to improve victim assistance programs.

Addressing the Coronavirus Pandemic

The Office, in consultation with the Board and the Governor's Family Violence Council (Council), supported victim service providers during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the beginning of the pandemic, the Council and the Board met virtually to discuss the needs of victim service providers. These discussions guided priorities for coronavirus emergency funding the Office received.

Members identified the following issues due to the pandemic: communal living in shelters, utilizing hotels for shelter stays, developing leave policies for nonprofits, transferring hotlines to remote, programs obtaining personal protective equipment (PPE), needing confidential and secure platforms to provide services virtually, court closures, obtaining protective orders, and suspension of abuse intervention programs (AIPs). Programs had to quickly adapt in order to continue 24/7 services while being completely virtual.

The Office created a webpage on its website to provide resources for victims of crime during the pandemic. The resources include a directory of programs providing services during the pandemic, hotlines, information about COVID-19, mental health services, supportive services, legal services, compensation, housing, pet resources, and State of Maryland resources. The website also provides guidance for victim service providers. The resources can be found at <http://goccp.maryland.gov/covid19-victim-resources/>.

The Office submitted a request for PPE to the Maryland Emergency Management Agency on behalf of victim service providers. In September 2020, the Office received N95 masks, gowns, face shields, gloves, disinfectant sanitizing wipes, and hand sanitizer to provide to more than 30 nonprofit and governmental victim service providers.

Accomplishments

Annual Statewide Memorial Services

In partnership with the Victim and Witness Divisions of the State's Attorneys' Offices, the Office and the Board sponsor four regional memorial services each year during the National Crime Victims' Rights Week. The memorial services feature inspirational speakers, musical performances, and quiet reflection which honor over 4,000 crime victims of homicide, vehicular manslaughter, and missing crime victims and their families. These memorial services provide a safe, supportive, and trustworthy space for families of crime victims to congregate and share their stories. Many advocates, who strive to serve victims of crime, help to coordinate the memorial services because they understand the importance of a positive outlet for families to

cope with their grief and honor their lost and loved ones. The regional memorial services are geographically divided throughout the State (*as illustrated below*).

Eastern Region	Western Region	Southern Region	Northern Region
Caroline	Allegany	Calvert	Anne Arundel
Dorchester	Carroll	Charles	Baltimore City
Kent	Frederick	Prince George's	Baltimore
Queen Anne's	Garrett	St. Mary's	Cecil
Somerset	Montgomery		Harford
Talbot	Washington		Howard
Wicomico			
Worcester			

Due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, and in an effort to protect the health and safety of organizers, guests, and communities in Maryland, the *31st Annual Statewide Memorial Services for Crime Victims and their Families* were canceled. The *31st Statewide Memorial Services* will be hosted by the Baltimore City, Charles County, Dorchester County, and Frederick County State's Attorneys' Offices in 2021.

Maryland Crime Victims' Rights Conference

The *Fifth Annual Maryland Crime Victims' Rights Conference* was also canceled due to COVID-19. This one-day conference typically provides crime victim service professionals the opportunity to listen, learn, and network with speakers and peers as it relates to emerging victim issues and innovative approaches to empower victims.

The Governor's Victim Assistance Awards are typically presented during the *Maryland Crime Victims' Rights Conference*. Despite the cancelation of the conference, the awards were presented virtually to three Maryland individuals and organizations "who help us fulfill our responsibility to create a safer Maryland."²

- The Homicide Survivor Advocacy Program at Roberta's House received the Vincent Roper Memorial Award in recognition of outstanding work to secure crime victim justice for all in a quiet and selfless manner.
- The Maryland Chesapeake Bay Region Bikers Against Child Abuse received the Henry Gleim Memorial Award in recognition of outstanding services to crime victims and those who work to serve them.

² Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services. (2020). [*Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services Presents 2020 Governor's Victim Assistance Awards*](#).

- Corneilius Scott, founder of the Family Survivor Network, received the Virginia Mahoney Award posthumously in recognition of an outstanding leader who epitomized true leadership in support of victims' rights.

Roper Victim Assistance Academy of Maryland

The Office also supports the *Roper Victim Assistance Academy* (Academy) which offers two levels of training, basic and advanced, to victim service professionals in Maryland. The basic training consists of a 40-hour standardized multidisciplinary academic curriculum designed for newer professionals, and is conducted as a one-week residential program. In 2020, the one-week basic training program occurred virtually due to COVID-19, and served as the 17th Academy that resulted in 28 professional graduates. Between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020, the Academy offered eight advanced training sessions on the impact of victimization on families, cyber victimization, immigrant victimization, and human trafficking, in which 190 participants completed the training.

All training provided by the Academy are nationally approved and certified for professional certification units and university credits. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and university credits for both the basic and advanced training programs are also offered by the Academy.

The Maryland Victim Assistance Certification Program is also offered by the Academy, and is available in three certification levels to coincide with years of experience and training. In FY 2020, 34 individuals received a certification (either Level I certification, Level II certification, or Level III certification).

Recommendations to the Governor

Pursuant to §§ 11-914(1) and 11-915(b)(5) of the Criminal Procedure Article, and under the authority of the Executive Director, the Board identified the following recommendations to improve treatment and services available for victims of crime (*as illustrated below*).

Recommendation 1: Support Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) for courts, custody, parole, probation, and sex offender alert line services.

Members of the Board reviewed VINE notification scripts in an effort to provide clear and useful notifications to victims of crime. The recommended changes were submitted to the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, which oversees Maryland VINE.

Recommendation 2: Include victim advocates in the planning and implementation of providing services to victims during a mass violence incident.

The Board has been collaborating with the [Active Assailant Interdisciplinary Workgroup](#) (AAIWG) to develop protocols and best practices for Family Assistance Centers and victim services when responding to an active assailant incident.

Recommendation 3: Expand training resources and availability for victim advocates and victim assistants throughout the State.

The Board supports the collaboration between the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc., the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault, and the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence to provide victim assistance service providers and others who work with victims of crime with improved and ongoing training and technical assistance. This project is funded through Victims of Crime Assistance (VOCA) Training and Technical Assistance.

All recommendations support the overall goals of enhancing victims' awareness of services, increasing victims' safety, and increasing victims' self-sufficiency

2021 Priorities

Priority 1: Maryland should be a leader in the effort to assist the underserved population of crime victims, children, persons with disabilities, elder adults, individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), marginalized communities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ) individuals, through outreach, training, and the encouragement of state and local agency collaboration.

Priority 2: Maryland should develop long term strategies to meet the financial needs of crime victims. Provisions should be made to increase the collection of costs imposed on convicted defendants in District and circuit courts that are distributed into the MVOC fund and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund. Increased revenue would address the mounting need that is necessary to continue supporting crime victims through services and compensation, statewide training, federal and state policies, technology, and public awareness and community outreach.

Key Initiatives

Victims' Rights Compliance Initiative

In April 1999, the Board and the Office established the *Victims' Rights Compliance Initiative* (Initiative) in an effort to remedy crime victims' rights violations. The goal and objective of the Initiative is to improve the criminal justice system's response to victims of crime through systematic improvements of services provided to victims; and to give victims the option to voice

their concerns and seek system response when they feel that their statutory rights have been violated at any point in the criminal justice system.

In support of this Initiative, the Office advises criminal justice agencies on victims' rights. The Office promotes and facilitates voluntary, efficient, and effective compliance with laws; analyzes agency implementation practices, policies, procedures, and tools; and recommends and resolves complicated questions and problems between victims and service providers in a non-adversarial manner. More specifically, the Office responds to calls, letters, and emails received from crime victims across the State alleging violations of various crime victims' rights, seeking referrals for direct services, and looking for information and explanations about the criminal justice process. Some of these examples include:

- Frustration with the lack of (or limited) criminal justice agency responses to the crime;
- Confusion about and/or failure to be informed of filing of nolle prosequi by prosecutors;
- Lack of information regarding case status;
- Delay in processing and/or denial of claims by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board;
- Nonpayment of restitution by offenders granted probationary sentences or parole; and
- Lack of notification of offender's parole, violation of probation, and release from incarceration.

In FY 2020, the Victim Services Program Manager, who serves as the Victim Services Coordinator, responded to 120 calls, letters, and emails from crime victims in the State regarding complaints or requests for services (*as illustrated below*).

Jurisdiction	Number of Complaints/Request for Services
Anne Arundel	4
Baltimore	12
Baltimore City	11
Dorchester	1
Frederick	3
Harford	3
Howard	2
Montgomery	4
Prince George's	8
Queen Anne's	1
St. Mary's	1
Wicomico	1
Worcester	1
Unknown	68
TOTAL	120

The Office seeks to refer victims with active cases to appropriate advocacy groups or responsible agencies, and to examine what occurred in cases which have been completed. As a result of these efforts, the Office received and addressed numerous victim contacts (*as illustrated below*).

	Referrals	Number of Referrals
Closed Matters	Child Advocacy Center	1
	Criminal Injuries Compensation Board or other financial assistance	47
	Department of Disabilities	2
	Department of Human Services	1
	Department of Juvenile Services	1
	Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services	5
	Law Enforcement Agency	8
	Local Management Board	1
	Courts	1
	Office of the Attorney General	1
	State's Attorney's Office or other legal assistance	27
	Transitional Housing Services	2
	Victim Assistance Organization	35
	TOTAL*	132

*The total number of referrals is greater than the number of complaints/requests for services because several victims received referrals to multiple organizations and agencies.

Crime Victim Mandated Pamphlets and Forms

Pursuant to Article 47 of the Maryland Declaration of Rights, § 11-914 of the Criminal Procedure Article, and other statutory provisions, the Board developed two pamphlets to ensure that a victim's right to be informed is upheld by law enforcement personnel, commissioners or juvenile justice intake workers, and State's Attorneys.

With the enactment of "Amber's Law" ([Chapter 643 of 2017](#)), individuals have received the opportunity to request reasonable protections for the safety of an alleged victim or the victim's family. The Board developed the brochure, *Maryland Crime Victims: Requesting Protections for Safety*, to inform victims on how to request that an offender be placed on electronic monitoring or electronic monitoring with victim stay-away alert technology.

In addition, and since October 1, 2017, the Maryland Parole Commission is required to notify a victim of an eligible inmate's administrative release eligibility date, the victim's right to request an open hearing, and the victim's right to submit written testimony concerning the crime and the impact of the crime on the victim. The *Crime Victims and Witnesses: Your Rights and Services* and the *Your Rights as a Victim in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Process* brochures have been updated to reflect this right of victims.

As illustrated below, **167,250** crime victim mandated materials have been distributed throughout the State, between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020.

Primary Agency Responsible for Distributing Crime Victim Mandated Pamphlets/Form	Language	Quantity Distributed
Law Enforcement (<i>Crime Victims and Witnesses: Your Rights and Services</i>)	English	122,750
Law Enforcement (<i>Crime Victims and Witnesses: Your Rights and Services</i>)	Spanish	30,700
Law Enforcement (<i>Maryland Crime Victims: Requesting Protections for Safety</i>)	English	1,500
State's Attorney's Office (<i>Your Rights as a Victim in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Process</i>)	English	4,000
State's Attorney's Office (<i>Your Rights as a Victim in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Process</i>)	Spanish	1,700
State's Attorney's Office (<i>Crime Victim Notification and Demand for Rights Form</i>)	English	5,200
State's Attorney's Office (<i>Crime Victim Notification and Demand for Rights Form</i>)	Spanish	1,400
TOTAL Quantity Distributed		167,250

Grant Programs

Maryland Victims of Crime Fund

Chapter 561 of 1991 created the MVOC fund as a source of revenue to allow the Board to ensure implementation of the Declaration of Crime Victims' Rights Amendment to the Maryland Constitution, as well as the Guidelines for Treatment of and Assistance to Crime Victims and Witnesses, and other laws adopted to benefit victims and witnesses of crime.³

The primary purpose of this fund is to provide advocacy and support services to victims of crime to develop and enhance existing programs that serve victims of crime in Maryland. In 2019, the Office released the *FY 2020 Maryland Victims of Crime (MVOC) Fund NOFA* which identified the following priorities:

- Direct services for victims of crime;
- Victim service providers in law enforcement;
- Victim/witness service providers in State's Attorneys' offices;
- Enhanced services and support for child advocacy centers; and
- Enhanced services to crime victims that aid and promote the distribution of mandated brochures and educate them on their rights according to Maryland law.

³ Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services. (2012). [Maryland State Board of Victim Services Manual \(Rev. 2012\)](#).

Through FY 2020 MVOC funds, the Office awarded \$600,000 to sub-recipients. The Office also provided sub-recipients with an opportunity to receive a second year of level funding for FY 2021 provided the program was in good standing. As long as project goals and objectives were being met and funds were being expended accordingly, sub-recipients would receive continuation funding in the same amount that was granted the previous year. All MVOC sub-recipients were in good standing and received level MVOC funding for FY 2021.

Legal Services for Crime Victims Fund

Chapters 125 and 126 of 2007 created the LSCV grant program under § 11-919 of the Criminal Procedure Article to provide victims of crime the opportunity to have legal representation in the criminal court system. Through this grant program, funds are received from unclaimed restitution to protect victims' rights as provided by law. The Division of Parole and Probation, and the Department of Juvenile Services collect court-ordered restitution from adult defendants and juvenile respondents for subsequent distribution to crime victims.

The primary purpose of this grant program is to ensure that the money obtained from unclaimed restitution is used for annual grants to provide legal counsel to victims of crime and delinquent acts, and to protect the victims' rights as provided by law. This supports the Office's objective to improve victim services for Maryland residents. Through FY 2021 LSCV funds, the Office awarded \$75,000.